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Aleksandr Voronsky's Aesthetic Realism: "Art Is the Cognition of Life"

Today the question of art as an exact cognition of life has not only a theoretical, but deeply practical character. — Aleksandr Voronsky.¹

I. INTRODUCTION

An attempt was made in "The Soviet Aesthetics of Aleksandr Voronsky" to introduce the aesthetic theory of the major Russian Marxist literary critic of the pre-Stalinist Soviet era. Since that paper aimed at a concise exposition of Voronsky's background in Marxism-Plekhanovism, his understanding of art and the unconscious, and his method of aesthetic evaluation in the hitherto neglected anthology *Art as the Cognition of Life* (1998), only passing attention was given to his Belinskyist-Plekhanovist definition "art is the cognition of life," or "art is the cognition of life with the help of images."

Albeit in brief, it was observed that the definition is more precisely understood as "art as the *intuitive* cognition of life," since Voronsky says intuition is the "main organ" of the artistic function; explained that it is a "general psychologistic definition" that "emphasizes sensorymental cognitive states and operations in the social life of art"; and added that the "psychologism" is premised on the Marxist materialist epistemology (theory of knowledge) that social existence determines social consciousness.² Further analysis, however, reveals an error of overemphasis in this interpretation.

While it is necessary to underscore intuition in Voronsky's definition of art, it is difficult to make a justifiable case for psychologism or aesthetic psychologism, terms that are typically reserved for mind-oriented art doctrines connected to thinkers such as Franz Brentano, Edward Bullough, Johann Herbart, and the Neo-Kantians, that is, to empiricism, idealism, and rationalism. Voronsky, a Marxist-Plekhanovist dialectical materialist, does not limit his aesthetics to sensual-psychical experience. Rather, he advances a form of aesthetic realism, which sees art in relation to an independent objective world outside the mind, and he posits a normative mimetic-cognitive definition of true art as realistic art, which knows the world in images that correspond to its nature.

II. AESTHETIC NORMATIVISM AND AESTHETIC REALISM

Psychologism is the "tendency [. . .] to approach philosophical problems, whether ethical, logical, aesthetic, or metaphysical, from the standpoint of psychology." In the case of aesthetics, Brentanoism entails "primacy of the mental" and reduces an artwork to "human thought

processes" and the mental acts/objects constituted by authorial intention; Bulloghism sees aesthetics as a "mental state *sui generis*" and relies "entirely on introspective evidence"; Herbartism is a physiology of aesthetic pleasure with an associationistic tendency; and Neo-Kantianism confines itself to intellectual cognition.⁴

That Voronsky is not a psychologistic aesthetician is indicated by four basic propositions of his on art: (1) art is a means of cognizing life with the help of images; (2) art is a social phenomenon; (3) art is a means of communicating between people; and (4) art is a predominantly a peacetime endeavor. 5 Voronsky expands on the first proposition as follows, which is most relevant to the focus of this paper:

First of all, art is the *cognition* of life. Art is *not the free play of fantasy*, feelings, and moods: art is not the expression of merely the subjective sensations and experiences of the poet; art is not assigned the goal of primarily awakening in the reader "good feelings." Like science, art cognizes life. Both art and science have the same subject: life, reality. But sciences analyzes, art synthesizes; science is abstract, art is concrete; science turns to the mind of man, art to his sensual [i.e., sensory] nature. Science cognizes life with the help of concepts, art with the aid of images in the form of living, sensual contemplation. 6

In other words, art is a type of non-rational knowing that relates objects to human physical senses and sensory consciousness, combines sense data, represents external reality, and knows objective existence through mentally configured representations.⁷

Voronsky gets this definition from Belinsky and Chernyshevsky, not to mention Plekhanov, who assimilates the aesthetics of the two former thinkers. But Voronsky also defines the "realist-writer" in the same terms: "The realist-writer does not dream up, invent or create fantastic worlds; he doesn't engage in free play of imagination, nor does he seek embellishments for their own sake." Logically, the first proposition is thus for *realistic art*, and Voronsky presents that as the "Marxist" view. Georg Lukács, though, says of Marx's aesthetics that "*free play of the creative imagination and unrestrained fantasy* are compatible with the Marxist conception of realism" and that Marx valued the "fantastic tales" of Balzac and E. T. A. Hoffman. 11

If Lukács's statement is correct, Voronsky's apparent disvaluation of "fantastic worlds" and the "free play of imagination" would have to be more accurately described as the *Marxist-Plekhanovist* view. That said, Voronsky is making a case not for aesthetic psychologism, but for *aesthetic normativism* and *aesthetic realism*. Florian Cova and Nicolas Pain explain that aesthetic normativism is "the theory according to which aesthetic judgments can be correct or incorrect" while aesthetic realism is "realism applied to aesthetic properties," realism being "the metaphysical [i.e., ontological] theory according to which properties that we ascribe when we make a judgment, can exist independently from our own existence and judgments, and are characteristics of objects." ¹²

Voronsky maintains that "being determines consciousness," that "subjective sensations have objective significance," and that "objective beauty exists in nature, and the artist discovers it *for us* in his creations." Artistic images (sensuous mental representations), as distinct from discursive symbols, can thus be *aesthetically* and *sociologically* evaluated, judged, as either (a) "artistically true" with "correct insights" or as (b) obtaining a "false interpretation" and "fake objectivity," depending on how accurately or inaccurately the artistic images "reflect" and "correspond to the nature of what is portrayed." While the two types of evaluation cannot be examined here, Voronsky's aesthetic realism codifies sensitivity to the actual and represented movement and texture of real life (natural, social, psychological) as a principle for artistic judgment, valuing *striking novelty*, *profound excitement*, and *discovery* as core criteria of the "true work of art." ¹⁵

III. DEFENSE OF REALISTIC ART AND ARTISTIC INDIVIDUALITY

Voronsky provides a normative aesthetic realist definition that uses the generic term "art" as a synonym for the more specific term "realistic art." Thereupon, he formulates the opposition of "art" (realistic art) and "pseudo-art" (non-realistic art), which he compares to the opposition of materialism/science, on one hand, and idealism/pseudo-science, on the other hand. Consonant with the analogy, Voronsky says, "By its *very nature*, art is [. . .] materialistic, atheistic and antireligious." But, again, this is not a generic statement about art in itself. Voronsky is undertaking a popularization and defense of the "realistic conception of art."

Notably, when Voronsky uses the word "art," he intends it the same sense as what he terms "genuine art," "genuine realistic art," and "true art." Likewise with the word "artist": it is aligned with "genuine artist," "genuine artist-realist," "genuine poet," "realist painter," "realist-writer," and "true artist." (Voronsky contrasts the "mere craftsman" and the "genuine artist," implying that craft is a form of pseudo-art, or not art.) Consider, for instance, the three following aesthetic propositions Voronsky makes: (1) "true art takes its material from *reality*"; (2) "genuine art demands precision because it deals with the object, it is empirical"; and (3) "the basis of genuine art is experience."

When Voronsky defines art as the intuitive cognition of life, he means *realistic art is the intuitive cognition of life*. He does not explain why he synonymizes "art" and "realistic art"; however, the semantic conflation stems from a partisan motive in his normative aesthetic realism to educate the contemporary artist or writer as a realist. One will recall that Voronsky was a politically committed Bolshevik literary critic and active under the Lenin-Trotsky regime, making philosophical partisanship a matter of course. ²³ As confirmed in his 1930 self-defense when he was politically attacked by the Stalin regime:

Nowhere and never have I advocated neutrality, apoliticism, idealism or art for the sake of art. On the contrary, I have fought against such inclinations. What is unique about my critical works is that I never engaged in *abstract* theorizing, but always had in mind *concrete* assistance to the young writer in search of his artistry.²⁴

But Voronsky's political commitment and his advocacy of realism are not designed to force art or artists to toe an ideological party line, which would obstruct artistic cognition of life. As he said seven years earlier, "[C]ommunist ideology is a phenomenon of supreme importance, but we are dealing with works of art, and art is not a feuilleton, it is not a propaganda or agitational speech, and it is not a polemical article. It has its own methods and its own peculiar features." He adds, "We must firmly and decisively straighten out the political line of many of these [non-party] writers, but we must never forget that we cannot demand communist ideology let alone clearly defined and consistent communist ideology from a nonparty artist." 26

Art cannot be judged by ideological evaluation, but by *aesthetic evaluation*.²⁷ Tellingly, Voronsky refused to attend the 1934 Soviet Writers' Congress, where the bureaucratic-totalitarian Stalinist policy of *socialist realism* was codified by Moscow party chief Andrei Zhdanov, who demanded that art serve party "ideological remolding," be "optimistic" and "tendencious," and exploit "genres, styles, forms and methods of literary creation" as "weapons" per party tactics.²⁸ Counter to the totalitarians, Voronsky holds that the artist must be free to doubt, search, and make errors, to "remove the veils of life," to make discoveries, and to "refract the world" through

individuality.²⁹

IV. MODERN ART AS AN AESTHETIC NORM AND MIMESIS

Voronsky's defense of artistic individuality is admirable from a democratic perspective. Still, as one looks closer at his aesthetic theory, it becomes apparent that the idea of "realistic art" as true art involves a modern notion of art as a norm for art transhistorically (though he also maintains that art cannot be separated from its specific milieu in history and society). That is seen when he says, "Modern literature [...] is atheistic and pagan literature," which is a variation of his earlier-cited comment on the "very nature" of art. Modern literature being Voronsky's standard for art, it is not surprising that nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century realist writers are highly represented in his "realistic conception of art."

Tolstoy is the largest planet in Voronsky's realist solar system: a "genius," a "sage," a "spontaneous dialectical materialist." After him, Shakespeare is the next greatest dialectician. Other big planets are (1) Dostoevsky, Gogol, Lermontov, and Pushkin; (2) Blok, Chekov, Flaubert, Goethe, Gorky, Homer, Ibsen, and Uspensky; and (3) Balzac, France, Griboedov, Proust, Stanislavsky, and Wells. These writers are ranked here according to frequency of reference relative to Tolstoy. Additionally, when Tolstoy is mentioned, at least one reference is also made to Bely, Cervantes, Ermolaevich, Esenin, Fadeev, O. Henry, Kellerman, Longfellow, Prishvin, Schedrin, Tagore, A. Tolstoy, Turgenev, and Zola. The list is not exhaustive.

Historically, Cervantes and Shakespeare are early-modern founders of realistic, bourgeois humanistic literature, transitioning from medieval Christian allegory and feudal romance. Of course, Shakespeare's realism is of a peculiar kind: a coexistence of anachronism, allegorism, historicism, realism, and supernaturalism; a world in which the human, divine, and demonic interact.³⁵ Voronsky does not address this matter or relate it to his ostensibly negative position on "fantastic worlds" and the "free play of fantasy," nor does he explain his inclusion of Homer's ancient mythological heroic epics, only noting that the poet and the playwright successfully and affectively "reflect general psychological traits" in "types and images."³⁶

Against this, one could argue that Voronsky's normative aesthetic realism commits what is known as "the fallacy of taking the most general principles of artistic technique operative in some particular period and culture as the principles of art itself." After all, he invokes "modern literature" and "contemporary literature." Yet the counterargument can be made that the deeper concern is not modern realism, but the ancient principle of *mimesis* (i.e., imitative representation of life), or what Aristotle calls "imitation of an action," and specifically the "narrative mode of imitation." Voronsky does, indeed, distinguish between (a) "true and tasteful imitation" and (b) "copying and blind imitation."

Mimesis, a term Voronsky does not use, is relatable to what he means by "realism" or "realistic conception art," realism being a mode of mimesis. 41 When, for example, he speaks of ascertaining artistic truth or artistic falsity in a work by means of aesthetic evaluation and sociological evaluation, he is articulating interest in judging the degrees of *affectional mimesis* (representation of psychological life) and *societal mimesis* (representation of social life) that are imagistically expressed in art. Voronsky never talks about photographing life, but of *reincarnating* it in images. 42 He says:

The artistic image is not a photograph or a copy of reality, it is not a passive snapshot, but at the same time it is not just dreamt up. *It displaces and replaces our concrete conceptions with one generalized conception.* And along with the displacement of this concrete material, it also displaces our real and immediate feelings. [...] In art, where our conceptions are refined and generalized, both our feelings and our thoughts connected with [unpurified] feelings are also

experienced and felt in generalized form.⁴³

An artistic image may thus have the represented sense of the real, even if the image does not resemble the real thing. 44 After all, "what is created in our imagination is a life which is condensed, purified, sifted—a life which is better than it is, and which is more like truth than the realist reality."45 Comparably, Aristotle, speaks of "reproducing the distinctive form of the original" in "a likeness which is true to life yet more beautiful."46

Thereby, Voronsky's aesthetic realism is a kind of mimetic theory with a suggested genealogy in the tradition of Aristotelian mimesis, which values *representation of the essences of things*, the *transmutation of reality* over its mere reproduction, and *art as a medium of knowledge* on par with science and philosophy. ⁴⁷ Indeed, Voronsky appears to see the exemplary realistic works of his time as golden achievements of the ancient mimetic principle operating in artistic cognition across history. Accordingly, he makes modern art an aesthetic norm and accommodates Homer and Shakespeare in spite of their fantastic and supernatural elements.

V. CONCLUSION

Aleksandr Voronsky's definition that "art is the cognition of life" is not a case of aesthetic psychologism that starts with subjective consciousness. Rather, his idea flows from an aesthetic realist theory that starts with objective reality, normatively delimits the concept of art to realistic-mimetic art (the aesthetic analog of science and materialism), and encourages assimilation of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century realist writers in order "for us" to know the external world and the world of feelings. While Voronsky's aesthetic realism is decidedly modern and partisan in orientation, it is moderated by a permissive and transhistorical aspect, admitting artistic cognition in Homer (mythical realism), Shakespeare (magical realism), and Tolstoy (empirical realism).

Voronsky has an implicit hierarchy of grander and smaller artists/realists, whose rank depends on how closely their artistic images align intuitive-sensory consciousness with living reality, the successful alignment of which is determined by how psychologically and socially real the images feel and how deeply they "infect' us" who experience the work in the act of reading. Voronsky's aesthetic realism can therefore be understood as a normative realist value theory of *intuitive-mimetic reflection*, predicated on the idea that if a creative intuition in images is correct, or confirmed to be correct—offering a truthful representation of life relationships and the essences of things—a work is realistic and thereby classifiable as true art, whereas anything else is some form of pseudo-art, such as craft or propaganda.

At this point, one can anticipate many philosophical criticisms against Voronsky's aesthetic theory, his normative use of the term "art" for realistic art, his artifactual categories, and his strong predilection for "verisimilitude," that is, representation within a lifelike range of plausibility, as seen in his championing of Tolstoyan realism. But before the criticisms are launched, further descriptive research needs to be undertaken on the opposition of art/pseudo-art, image/symbol, and reality/fantasy in Voronsky's aesthetic realism; the connection of art, cognition, and mimesis; and the relationship to Marx's own theory of art, imagination, and intuition, in order to more fully comprehend the aesthetic and political problematic of the mimetic-cognitive theory of art as the cognition of life. 50

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1 Aleksandr K. Voronsky, *Art as the Cognition of Life: Selected Writing, 1911–1936* (Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 1998), 115.

2 Alzo David-West, "The Soviet Aesthetics of Aleksandr Voronsky: A Brief Exposition," *American Society for Aesthetics Graduate E-Journal* 4, no. 2 (Spring-Sumer 2012): 2, 7n23,

http://www.asage.org/index.php/ASAGE/article/view/92; italics in original.

3 Ledger Wood, "Psychologism," *Dictionary of Philosophy*, ed. Dagobert D. Runes (Ames, IA: Littlefield, Adam, and Company, 1959), 258. Wood says psychologism is found in the approaches of David Hume, William James, and John Stuart Mill.

4 Benedetto Croce, "Aesthetic Psychologism and Other Recent Tendencies," *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, trans. Douglas Ainslie (London: McMillan, 1922; Questia), 404–19, 404, 405, 407, http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=10377719; Peter J. McCormick, "Husserl and Aesthetic Psychologism," *Modernity, Aesthetics, and the Bounds of Art* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 208–32, 218, 219, 225, 226; and Elizabeth Wilkinson, Introduction to *Aesthetics: Lectures and Essay by Edward Bulloughs*, ed. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1957), xvii–xliii, xxvii, xxix; italics in original. Z. A. Jordan says Brentano "returned to the thesis of the French rationalist thinkers of the seventeenth century that we know the mind better than we shall ever know matter." See Z. A. Jordan "The Lwów School," *Philosophy and Ideology: The Development of Philosophy and Marxism-Leninism in Poland since the Second World War* (1963; Marxists Internet Archive), http://www.marxists.org/archive/jordan/ideology/ch01.htm.

5 Voronsky, 102, 116, 179, 284, 295, 331.

6 Ibid., 98; "cognition" italicized in original; emphasis added to "not the free play of fantasy." After defining art as the cognition life, Voronsky justifies this position with a quote from Belinsky on "poetry" as "truth in the form of contemplation" and how the "poet thinks in images." The strong influence of Belinksy finds further expression when Voronsky quotes the nineteenth-century Russian literary critic on art, science, and reality: "[S]cience and art refine the gold of reality, and refashion it into exquisite forms. Consequently, science and art are not engaged in thinking up a new and unforeseen reality" (Voronsky, 218; emphasis added).

7 See recent discussion of sensory consciousness in Paula Droege, *Caging the Beast: A Theory of Sensory Consciousness* (Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 2003); and Arthur Melnick, *Phenomenology and the Physical Reality of Consciousness* (Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 2011).

8 Voronsky, 83, 98, 102, 224, 333.

9 Ibid., 213.

10 Ibid., 102.

11 Georg Lukács, "Marx and Engels on Aesthetics," *Writer and Critic: And Other Essays*, ed. and trans. Arthur Kahn (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2005), 78; emphasis added.

12 Florian Cova and Nicolas Pain, "Can Folk Aesthetics Ground Aesthetic Realism?" *Experimental Philosophy*, 2010, http://www.experimentalphilosophy.typepad.com/files/folkaesthetics.pdf.

13 Voronsky, 324, 369; emphasis added.

14 Ibid., 84, 85, 101, 121, 120, 132, 207.

15 Ibid., 99.

16 Ibid., 98, 101, 113, 116, 117, 120, 130, 149, 177, 218. Art and science are not the same in the comparison. Voronsky, 83, 224, says, "[G]enuine art consists in *thinking with the aid of images*," whereas science consists in "thinking with the aid of concepts," and, "[G]enuine realistic art, in 'removing the veils' from living reality, does this unlike science, by means of images"; italics in original.

17 Ibid., 366; emphasis added.

18 Ibid., 177.

¹⁹ Ibid., 83, 106, 111, 116, 224, 311, 365, 383.

²⁰ Ibid., 76, 84, 98, 99, 213, 214, 215, 218, 221, 280, 295, 297, 369, 384.

²¹ Ibid., 297. Compare with R. G. Collingwood's distinction between "art proper" and "various kinds of pseudo-art" (craft, magic, amusement). See "Art and Craft," *The Principles of Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 32–3.

²² Ibid., 83, 100, 111; italics in original.

²³ Vladimir Lenin, the leader of the Bolsheviks and highly regarded by Voronsky, explains that non-partisanship in philosophy is an illusion. Lenin says, "Marx and Engels were partisans in philosophy from start to finish, they were able to detect the deviations from materialism and concessions to idealism and fideism in each and every 'new' tendency." See "Parties in Philosophy and Philosophical Blockheads," *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism: Critical Comments on a Reactionary Philosophy* (Marxists Internet Archive, 1999), http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1908/mec/six4.htm.

²⁴ Voronsky, 396; italics in original.

²⁵ Ibid., 163–4; emphasis added.

²⁶ Ibid., 167; emphasis added.

²⁷ Ibid., 164. See the section "Aesthetic Evaluation" in David-West, 4–5.

²⁸ Ibid., 361; and A. A. Zdhanov, "Soviet Literature: The Richest in Ideas, the Most Advanced Literature" (Marxists Internet Archive), http://www.marxists.org/subject/art/lit_crit/sovietwritercongress/zdhanov.htm. ²⁹ Voronsky, 215, 221, 265. Voronsky does refer to "Soviet literature" as a "fighting weapon" and a

[&]quot;beautiful embellishment," but the sense is politically different from Zhdanov (265). On the embellishing function, there is an apparent inconsistency when Voronsky quotes Belinsky, saying, "The poet does not embellish reality" (98).

³⁰ Despite the transhistorical element, Voronsky repeatedly says art and the artist cannot be divorced from the "historical milieu," "historical moment," "historical period," "historical process," "social-historical conditions," and "social-historical milieu" (120, 193, 198, 200, 219, 200).

³¹ Ibid., 307.

³² Ibid., 107–9, 197, 347. Voronsky's view of Tolstoy as a literary dialectical materialist comes from philosopher and literary critic Liubov Akselrod, a follower of Plekhanov. Lukács makes the same assessment, that Tolstoy's realism is the literary equivalent of dialectical materialism. Lenin, a specialist in dialectical materialist philosophy, does not make that claim in his seven influential articles on Tolstoy. While mention of literature in the 1908 to 1911 articles is scanty, Lenin invokes the mirror/reflection theory and says that though Tolstoy "failed to understand" the first Russian Revolution of 1905, the writer "had drawn incomparable pictures of Russian life" and produced "the most sober realism, the tearing away of all and sundry masks"; he "depicted mainly the old, pre-revolutionary Russia" and "succeeded in raising so many problems" of that epoch with "brilliant illumination"; he gave "descriptions of this life" under radically changing conditions that "sharpened his attention, deepened his interested in what was going on around him"; and that he "vividly expressed the nature of the turn in Russia's history" in 1861 to 1905. See V. I. Lenin, *Articles on Tolstoi* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1966), 5, 6, 10, 19, 20; and Georg Lukács, "Reportage or Portrayal," *Essays on Realism*, ed. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981), 58.

³³ Voronsky, 108–9.

³⁴ Ibid., 83, 86, 92, 121, 145, 159, 176, 179, 207, 208, 215, 268, 293, 337, 354, 363, 387, 388. Voronsky says, "We are deeply convinced that the basic form of the new art, the art of our days, is realism, i.e., the

form which was employed with such inimitable and unsurpassed mastery by the classics of bourgeoisgentry literature" (90).

- ³⁵ Supernatural and fantastic elements in Shakespeare's "erratically realistic" (Auerbach, 327) literary world include angels, Beelzebub, destiny, devils, elves, fairies, fate, ghosts, goblins, God, gods, heaven, hell, limbo, Lucifer, magic, monsters, providence, Satan, sorcerers, spirits, sprites, witches, and wizards. Studies on the supernatural in Shakespeare have been published since 1908. One recent work is Kristen Poole, ed., *Supernatural Environments in Shakespeare's England: Spaces of Demonism, Divinity, and Drama* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). See also chapter thirteen on Shakespeare, "The Weary Prince," in Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 312–33.
- ³⁶ Voronsky, 86. By contrast, on pages 268 and 272, Voronsky complains about the "semireal, semifantastic surroundings" and "special, semifantastic world" that is "filled with fabrication and denial" in Dostoevsky and Gogol, both of whom he says "were not in tune with reality" (268, 272). Nevertheless, he finds artistic truth in their works and ranks the two men as only second to Tolstoy among Russian writers.

 ³⁷ Susanne K. Langer, *Problems of Art: Ten Philosophical Lectures* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), 115. Although there are differences in their aesthetics, Voronsky and Langer have some interesting points of convergence that are in need of examination. One should note that the two aestheticians use similar terms differently, for example, "abstract," "concrete," "feelings," "image," and "symbol." Differences in terminology reflect Voronsky's philosophical background in Belinksy (objective idealism) and Plekhanov (dialectical materialism) and Langer's in Cassirer (critical idealism) and Whitehead (process philosophy).
- ³⁸ Voronsky, 306, 307.
- ³⁹ Aristotle, "Section 1," *Poetics*, trans. S. H. Butcher (Internet Classics Archive, 2009), http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/poetics.1.1.html; and Aristotle, "Section 2," *Poetics*, trans. S. H. Butcher (Internet Classics Archive, 2009), http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/poetics.3.3.html. Auerbach defines mimesis as "the interpretation of reality through literary representation or 'imitation'" (554).
- ⁴⁰ Voronsky, 222, 282.
- ⁴¹ Stefan Morawski, "Mimesis and Realism," *Inquiries into the Fundamentals of Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1974), 226.
- 42 Voronsky, 207, 264, 273.
- ⁴³ Ibid, 328; emphasis added.
- ⁴⁴ See a practical short-story demonstration of this aesthetic problem of resemblance and representation in Henry James, "The Real Thing," (1892; Project Gutenberg, July 2001)

http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/2715/pg2715.html. See also discussion on resemblance and representation in Nelson Goodman, "Reality Remade," *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (Indianapolis, IA: Hackett Publishing, 1976), 3–43.

- ⁴⁵ Voronsky, 99; emphasis added.
- ⁴⁶ Aristotle, "Section 2," *Poetics*.
- ⁴⁷ Morawski, 204, 224.
- ⁴⁸ Voronsky, 120.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., 355. David Walsh, who applies Voronsky's method in film and literary criticism, has a comparable orientation to verisimilar realism. See the section "In Defense of the Classics" in David Walsh, "Marxism, Art and the Soviet Debate over 'Proletarian Culture," *World Socialist Web Site*, 30 September 2005, http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2005/09/le7-all.html. See also literary cases in James Brookfield and David Walsh, "One Hundred Years since the Death of Mark Twain," *World Socialist Web Site*, 22 April 2010, http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2010/04/twai-a22.html; David Walsh, "Fifty Years since the Death of Ernest Hemingway," *World Socialist Web Site*, 6 July 2011,

http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2011/07/hemi-j06.html; and David Walsh, "In Praise of George Eliot's *Adam Bede* on Its 150th Anniversary," *World Socialist Web Site*, 4 January 2010, http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2010/01/elio-j04.html. On anticipated arguments against Voronsky's aesthetic realism, see, for example, criticism of the aesthetic realism of Jerrold Levinson in John W. Bender, "Sensitivity, Sensibility, and Aesthetic Realism," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 59, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 73–83.

⁵⁰ See Michelle Marder Kamhi, "Art and Cognition: Mimesis vs. the Avant Garde," *Aristos*, December 2004, http://www.aristos.org/aris-03/art&cog.htm; Mikhail Lifshitz, *The Philosophy of Art of Karl Marx*, trans. Ralph B. Winn (London: Pluto Press, 1976), 77, 83; Karl Marx, "Introduction to a *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*" (Marxists Internet Archive)

http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/appx1.htm; Lukács, "Marx and Engels on Aesthetics"; Stefan Morawski, "The Aesthetic Views of Marx and Engels," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*28, no. 3 (Spring 1970): 301–14; Stefan Morawski, "Mimesis and Realism"; and Margaret A. Rose, *Marx's Lost Aesthetic: Karl Marx and the Visual Arts* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 85.

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